

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment After Final Rejection in response to the Final Office Action mailed on April 13, 2011. Applicants note with appreciation that in the outstanding Office Action, claims 1, 14-16, 18, 19, 29, 30, 39-41, 48 and 50-52 have been allowed, and that the Examiner has objected to claims 35 and 38 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that such claims are allowable if re-written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner amend the present application in the manner set forth in this Amendment. Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment After Final Rejection only addresses formal matters raised in a previous Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that applicants are entitled to entry of this Amendment as a matter of right under 37 CFR 1.116(b)(1), and prompt entry thereof is respectfully requested.

The present response is intended to be fully responsive to the rejections in the Office Action, and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

1. Status of the Claims

Claims 31, 34 and 56 have been rejected. Claims 1, 14-16, 18, 19, 29, 30, 39-41, 48 and 50-52 have been allowed, and claims 35 and 38 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and the Examiner has indicated that these claims would be allowable if re-written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 is amended herein, claims 2-6, 11, 12, 25, 32, 33, 43-47, 49, 53, 55 and 57 have been withdrawn with a request for rejoinder, and claims 7-10, 13, 17, 20-24, 26-28, 36-38, 42, 54 and 56 have been canceled.

No new matter is added by these amendments. After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-6, 11, 12, 14-16, 18, 19, 25, 29-35, 39-41, 43-53, 55 and 57 are pending in this application (with claims 2-6, 11, 12, 25, 32, 33, 43-47, 49, 53, 55 and 57 withdrawn with a request for rejoinder).

2. Claim Amendments

Applicants have amended independent claim 31 to include all of the limitations of claims 38 and 56. As such, applicants have canceled claims 38 and 56.

In view of the foregoing listing of claims, applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102 and §103 rejections is respectfully requested.

Moreover, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and rejoin previously withdrawn claims 2-6, 11, 12, 25, 32, 33, 43-47, 49, 53, 55 and 57 as depending directly or indirectly from allowable independent claims 1, 31 or 39. See, MPEP 821.04(a):

Where restriction was required between independent or distinct products, or between independent or distinct processes, and all claims directed to an elected invention are allowable, any restriction requirement between the elected invention and any nonelected invention that depends from or otherwise requires all the limitations of an allowable claim should be withdrawn. For example, a requirement for restriction should be withdrawn when a generic claim, linking claim, or subcombination claim is allowable and any previously withdrawn claim depends from or otherwise requires all the limitations thereof.

Based on the dictates of MPEP 821.04(a), applicants respectfully submit that rejoinder of claims 2-6, 11, 12, 25, 32, 33, 43-47, 49, 53, 55 and 57 is proper.

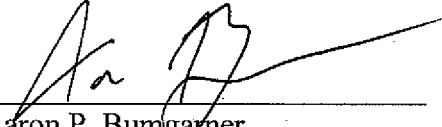
CONCLUSION

In view of the above-mentioned claim amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-6, 11, 12, 14-16, 18, 19, 25, 29-35, 39-41, 43-53, 55 and 57 are now in condition for allowance.

Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited. In the event that a telephone conference would facilitate the examination of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

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